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ABSTRACT

This guide intended for local school districts discusses the implementation of New Jersey's Special Review Assessment (SRA) process which provides high school students with the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of basic skills by an assessment method other than the statewide graduation test. The process is required for eleventh graders who have not passed the graduation test. A panel of at least three teaching staff members must: (1) evaluate student performance on state and local tests; (2) examine student's coursework and transcripts; (3) check student's visual, auditory, and/or medical data; (4) examine pupil's proficiencies in other areas; (5) look at performance on the state-selected test of English language fluency (for students of limited English proficiency); and (6) conduct formal interviews with the pupil, parents, teaching staff, and a guidance counselor or psychologist. In addition, the panel must decide whether the above documentation verifies that deficient skills have been mastered in accordance with district set criteria, and determine whether a student has demonstrated mastery in a sufficient number of skills areas to equal scoring at the state-wide standard on the graduation test. The panel's recommendation goes to the principal, the district superintendent, and the county superintendent who certifies whether the student has attained all skill requirements, can graduate, and receive a state-endorsed diploma. Student SRA Profile forms are included. (KSA)

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THE SPECIAL REVIEW ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Guidelines for District Implementation

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New Jersey State Department of Education

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THE SPECIAL REVIEW ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Guidelines for District Implementation

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CN 500
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OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines have been prepared to help local school districts establish a process for the Special Review Assessment (SRA), as mandated in the high school graduation law (18A:7C-1). Since the class of 1985 is the first class to be affected by these requirements, it is imperative that districts begin to plan for this alternative assessment and establish a procedure by the end of the 1983-84 school year.

The SRA must be implemented for all eligible students who have not passed the graduation test by the end of grade eleven. Guidelines which are consistent with the policy adopted by the State Board of Education for assessment of limited English proficient students who enter after grade eight are also included. The date for the implementation of these guidelines, however, will begin with the graduating class of 1987.

These guidelines provide a blueprint for the establishment and completion of the SRA process, which includes the certification of skills attainment. I must emphasize that the purpose of this process is to provide an alternative assessment for students who have mastered the required basic skills, but who do not perform well on formal tests. It is another, but equally rigorous, method of assessing skill attainment.

Our goal in providing these guidelines has been to create a fair, yet rigorous SRA process which will ensure the integrity of the state-endorsed high school diploma.

Saul Cooperman
Commissioner

OVERVIEW OF THE SRA

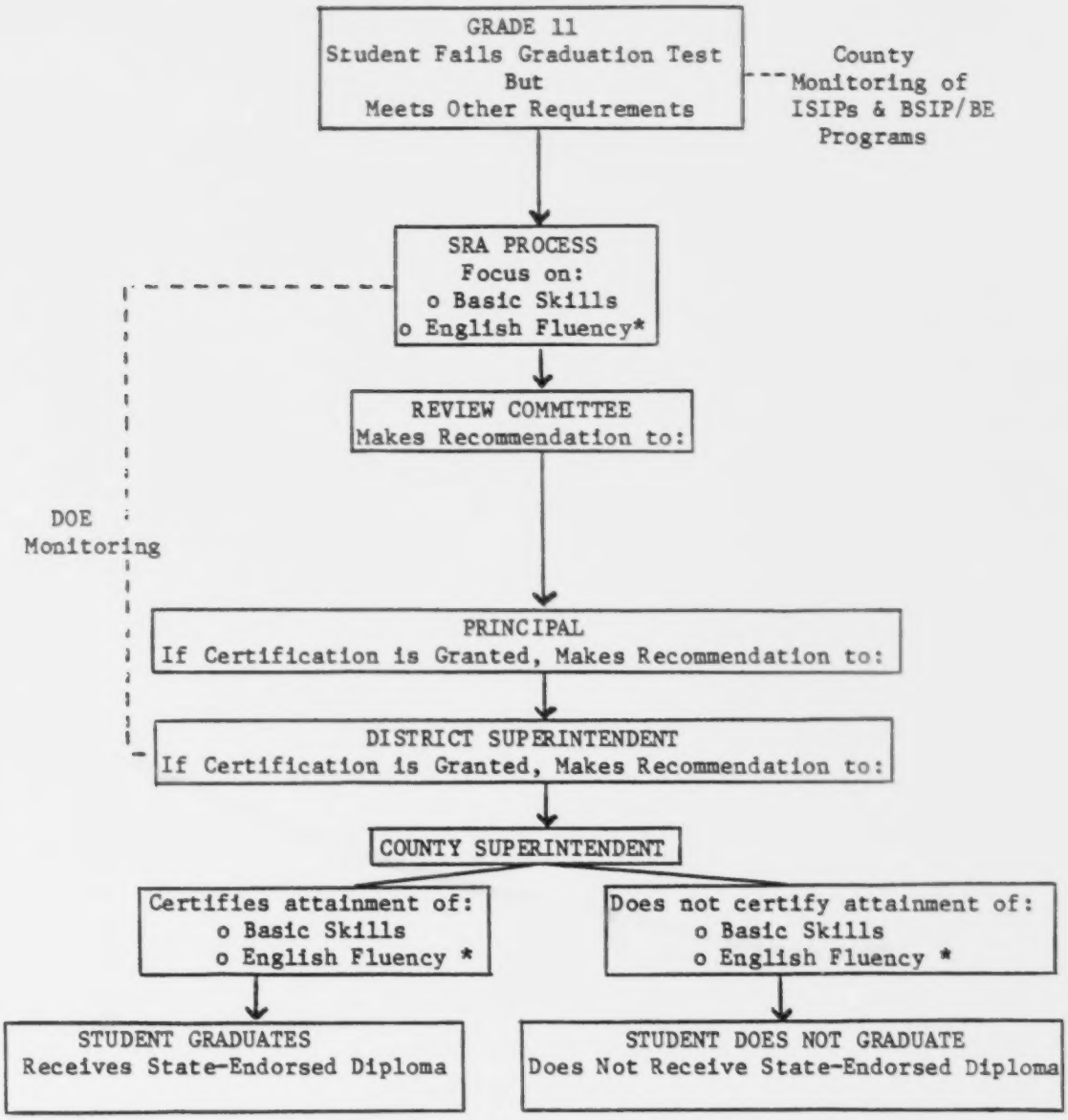
The SRA is an assessment process which provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of basic skills by an assessment method other than the statewide graduation test. It is available to any student who has satisfied all credit, curriculum, and attendance requirements for high school graduation, but who has not passed the reading and/or mathematics portion of the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) test by the end of the eleventh grade. The SRA is to be completed and a recommendation of skills attainment submitted to the county superintendent by March 1 of the twelfth grade.

The SRA process is a comprehensive one. A panel of at least three teaching staff members must review various performance indicators to determine whether a student has mastered the skills measured by the ninth grade statewide graduation test for which there has not been demonstrated mastery on prior test administrations. This panel must evaluate a student's basic skills competencies and make recommendations to the high school principal in writing, as to whether the student has mastered these requisite skills and should be certified as eligible for the state-endorsed diploma.

To assure appropriate safeguards in this process, the district superintendent and county superintendent must also review the information submitted by the school principal and certify in writing whether the needed skills have been attained. This process is intended to assess students' mastery of basic skills, while maintaining the integrity of the state-endorsed diploma.

The following chart outlines the sequence of steps in the SRA process.

THE SRA PROCESS



*If student is limited English proficient and entered New Jersey schools after grade eight.

IMPLEMENTATION

Timelines

- The SRA is conducted during the twelfth grade, but must be completed prior to March 1. The recommendation to certify attainment of the basic skills must be submitted to the county superintendent by March 1.

Eligible Students

Students eligible for the SRA are identified by the end of grade eleven. These are students who have not passed one or more parts of the graduation test, but have met all other credit, curriculum, and attendance requirements.

ISIPs

Individual Student Improvement Plans (ISIPs) are developed for every student who fails the graduation test in grade nine. The ISIP must be updated annually and should focus on the specific skills in which the student has not demonstrated mastery on the ninth grade statewide test and the services that will be provided to remediate any deficiencies.

Parental Notification

Students and their parents/guardians must be informed that a formal review is being undertaken and provided with an opportunity to appear and present evidence to the panel.

Gathering Student Information

Once students have been identified as SRA candidates, the district superintendent must designate staff to be responsible for collecting all test data, coursework, transcripts, and other indicators of student performance. This information is submitted to the SRA review panel.

Review Panel(s)

A panel(s) composed of at least three teachers not presently instructing the SRA candidates is established. The number of review panels necessary in each district is based upon the number of eligible students. Each panel evaluates the assessment information collected for each student and makes a written recommendation to the school principal regarding the certification of skills attainment.

Review of Skills

Each panel will:

1. Review each student's ISIP to identify the reading and mathematics skills in which the student has not demonstrated mastery.

2. Set criteria for determining mastery for each skill according to source of documentation.

As part of the SRA process each panel will:

1. Evaluate all of the following areas:

   - performance on state tests;
   - performance on locally selected examinations;
   - performance in coursework;
   - examination of the pupil's transcripts to note strengths in other related areas;
   - visual, auditory and/or medical data as appropriate;
   - examination of credit and curriculum performance;
   - examination of pupil proficiencies in other areas;
   - performance on the state-selected test of English language fluency for students of limited English proficiency who enrolled in New Jersey schools after grade eight,

   and conduct:

   - a formal interview with the pupil;
   - a formal interview with the parents;
   - a formal interview with the teaching staff;
   - a guidance counselor/psychologist review as appropriate.

2. Determine whether the above documentation verifies that deficient skills have been mastered in accordance with district set criteria.

3. Determine whether each student has demonstrated mastery in a sufficient number of skills areas to equal scoring at the state-wide standard on the graduation test.

4. Compile a profile for each student which includes:

   - a copy of the ISIP updated at the end of the eleventh grade;
   - the Student SRA Profile (see attached).

GATHERING INFORMATION

Sources of Information

Information collected must be from a variety of sources as stipulated in the administrative code and described in the previous section. All information should address each skill on the student's ISIP, rather than general skill areas or clusters. The following must be reviewed:

1. Standardized Tests

   Test information must be selected from valid and reliable instruments. Specific skills and test items must be reviewed, rather than subtest or total test scores. Items selected should be at least at the same difficulty level as the state graduation test. There should be a comparable number of test items reviewed in order to be able to verify the mastery of each skill.

2. Testing for Limited English Proficient Students

   SRA candidates of limited English proficiency who entered after grade eight must demonstrate mastery of basic skills in their native language, English, or a combination of both languages. Available native language tests that are designed for the same level of difficulty as the graduation test may be used to assess specific skills.

   When valid and reliable native language tests are not available in a particular language, the district must select a person proficient in that language from a department resource list of trained assessors. This individual will assess the needed skills by:

   - translating appropriate sections of the mathematics test;
   - selecting parallel items in the native language from a variety of sources for reading and some mathematics skills;
   - report the findings and recommendations to the SRA panel.

   The department will assist districts in this effort by establishing a resource network of assessors in a variety of languages and by training them. The department will also maintain a resource list of tests in languages other than English, set requirements for reading material to be used in the reading assessment, and establish a network for the exchange of reading materials.

   In addition to the basic skills assessment, limited English proficient students who entered after grade eight must also attain the state set standard of English fluency on the English

fluency test. The department, through committee process, will select one test for this purpose. The State Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Commissioner, will establish a statewide standard for English fluency.

3. Coursework Proficiencies

Course proficiencies are required for all students in communication, computation, and other curricular areas. The mastery of those basic skills found deficient on the graduation test may be demonstrated by the successful completion of those coursework proficiencies that are the same as those on the test.

These proficiencies may be met through demonstrated performance, successfully passing test(s), participation in educational programs, mastery of a set of objectives, successful course completion and/or other means established by the local district to demonstrate proficiency. Supporting documentation of successful completion of course proficiencies must be submitted to the review panel.

The bilingual and/or ESL teachers of limited English proficient students should be consulted regarding student achievement in the basic skills in the native language and/or English.

4. Other Information

Other information, such as a review of student transcripts and interviews with students and parents, should also be submitted to the review panel.

CERTIFICATION OF SKILLS ATTAINMENT

When the SRA review panel determines that the student:

- has attained mastery of the required basic skills,
- has attained the state level of English fluency (if appropriate),

the panel makes its recommendation to the principal, who certifies that the student has/has not attained the basic skills and English fluency requirements to the district superintendent, who may/may not certify and recommend the same to the county superintendent.

The county superintendent certifies that the student has/has not attained all skill requirements and can/can not graduate and receive a state-endorsed diploma.

Failure to be certified at any level means the student does not meet the statewide testing requirement, and, thus, cannot receive a state-endorsed diploma, unless the student is retested with the statewide test in grade twelve and passes.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STUDENT SRA PROFILE

District _____ County _____ School _____

Name of Student _____ School Year _____

Please Check the Following:

1. This student is limited English proficient. If yes, complete number two. ☐ YES ☐ NO
2. This student enrolled in a New Jersey school after grade eight. ☐ YES ☐ NO

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. These forms are to be completed for every student who is eligible for the SRA process. Please note that limited English proficient students must demonstrate their basic skills proficiency on the formal graduation test beginning with the graduating class of 1987. Thus, these forms and sections related to limited English proficient student information, native language and English fluency testing need not be completed for this population until school year 1986-87.
2. Attach a copy of the student's ISIP updated at the end of the eleventh grade.
3. The district superintendent retains the pink copy of these forms and forwards the white and yellow copies to the county superintendent of schools.
4. The county superintendent retains the white copy and returns the yellow copy to the district superintendent after review and signing.
5. The district must maintain documentation to support that which is reported in each SRA profile.

RECOMMENDATION OF SKILLS ATTAINMENT

We hereby recommend that _____ be certified as having demonstrated mastery of all required basic skills and English language fluency (if appropriate) commensurate with those skills needed to be eligible for the state-endorsed high school diploma.

Review Panel	Title	Signature	Date

CERTIFICATION OF SKILLS ATTAINMENT

I hereby certify that _____ has demonstrated mastery of all required basic skills and English language fluency (if appropriate) commensurate with those skills needed to be eligible for the state-endorsed high school diploma. Furthermore, the above-named student has satisfied all credit, curriculum and attendance requirements for graduation to date.

School: _____ School District: _____ County: _____

Principal (Please Type)	Principal (Signature)	Date
District Superintendent (Please Type)	District Superintendent (Signature)	Date
County Superintendent (Please Type)	County Superintendent (Signature)	Date

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This form is to be completed for every student who is eligible for the SRA process.
2. The district superintendent retains the pink copy and forwards the white and yellow copies to the county superintendent of schools.
3. The county superintendent retains the white copy and returns the yellow copy to the district superintendent after review and signing.

SRA: SKILLS ATTAINMENT DOCUMENTATION SUMMARY

District _____

Name of Student _____

Part IA: Standardized Tests (list only those skill deficiencies that will be reviewed via standardized tests)

Skill Deficiencies	Name of Test(s)	Items	Mastery Criteria	Skill Mastered	
				Yes	No

Part IB: English Language Fluency Test (for LEP students who entered after grade eight)

Fluency Achieved _____ YES _____ NO

Fluency Test Score _____

Comments:

16

17

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. This form is to be completed for every student who is eligible for the SRA process.
2. The district superintendent retains the pink copy and forwards the white and yellow copies to the county superintendent of schools.
3. The county superintendent retains the white copy and returns the yellow copy to the district superintendent after review and signing.

SRA: SKILLS ATTAINMENT DOCUMENTATION SUMMARY

District _____

Name of Student _____

Part II: Coursework Performance (list only those skill deficiencies that will be reviewed via transcripts, credit and coursework performance)

Skill Deficiencies	Course Name/ Course Title	*Specific Proficiency	Mastery Criteria	Skill Mastered	
				Yes	No
Comments:					

*Indicate "NL" if native language is used.

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. This form is to be completed for every student who is eligible for the SRA process.
2. The district superintendent retains the pink copy and forwards the white and yellow copies to the county superintendent of schools.
3. The county superintendent retains the white copy and returns the yellow copy to the district superintendent after review and signing.

SRA: SKILLS ATTAINMENT DOCUMENTATION SUMMARY

District _____

Name of Student _____

Part III: Other Areas (list only those skill deficiencies that will be reviewed via means other than tests, credit and course proficiencies)

Skill Deficiencies	Method of Examination	Mastery Criteria	Skill Mastered	
			Yes	No

Comments:

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. This form is to be completed for every student who is eligible for the SRA process.
2. The district superintendent retains the pink copy and forwards the white and yellow copies to the county superintendent of schools.
3. The county superintendent retains the white copy and returns the yellow copy to the district superintendent after review and signing.

SRA: SKILLS ATTAINMENT DOCUMENTATION SUMMARY

District _____

Name of Student _____

Part IV: Interviews

Interviewees	Date of Interview	Remarks	Signatures of Interviewees
1. Student _____ 2. Parents _____ _____ 3. Teaching Staff _____ _____ _____			

Part V: Remarks from Other Interviews (as appropriate)

1. Visual, auditory and/or other medical data:

2. Review of guidance counselor, psychologist, etc.:

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. This form is to be completed for every student who is eligible for the SRA process.
2. The district superintendent retains the pink copy and forwards the white and yellow copies to the county superintendent of schools.
3. The county superintendent retains the white copy and returns the yellow copy to the district superintendent after review and signing.